

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /068 W  
-----102775 201140Z /23  
R 171430Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7311

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PORT LOUIS 0189

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, MP  
SUBJECT: A CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE IN RAMGOOLAM'S CONTINUED LEADERSHIP  
HAS DEVELOPED, ESPECIALLY WITHIN HIS OWN LABOR PARTY

SUMMARY. DURING PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM'S MOST RECENT TRIP  
ABROAD, FROM WHICH HE IS DUE BACK THIS WEEKEND, A SORT  
OF "CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE" HAS DEVELOPED IN HIS CONTINUED  
LEADERSHIP OF THE GOVERNMENT AND OF THE LABOR PARTY.  
THE GROWING UNHAPPINESS WITH HIS LACK OF DIRECTION  
AND DRIVE HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO A BOIL BY THE UNPRECE-  
DENTED PUBLIC CRITICISM VOICED BY THREE "YOUNG TURK"  
LABOR DEPUTIES, WHO HAVE DEMANDED SOME DRASTIC CHANGES,  
INCLUDING A CABINET SHAKE-UP, THOROUGHGOING REFORM OF  
THE PARTY, AND AN END TO CORRUPTION, FAVORITISM AND  
INCOMPETENCE (PORT LOUIS 144 AND 184). ALTHOUGH EVERY-  
ONE EXPECTS RAMGOOLAM TO MOVE QUICKLY TO REESTABLISH  
HIS AUTHORITY, EVEN PEOPLE CLOSE TO HIM ARE PREDICTING  
HE WILL NOT SUCCEED AND THAT THE TIME HAS COME FOR HIM  
TO CEDE THE LEADERSHIP TO SOMEONE ELSE. SPECULATION NOW  
FOCUSES ON TWO QUESTIONS: HOW THE SUCCESSION WILL BE  
ARRANGED, WITH THE MOST LIKELY SCENARIO HAVING RAMGOOLAM  
"STEP UP" TO THE POST OF GOVERNOR GENERAL; AND WHO WILL

SUCCEED TO THE LEADERSHIP, THE ONLY TWO CREDIBLE CANDIDATES  
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BEING FINANCE MINISTER RINGADOO AND AGRICULTURE MINISTER  
BOOLELL, WITH THE FORMER HAVING THE INSIDE TRACK BECAUSE  
HE IS THOUGHT TO ENJOY RAMGOOLAM'S PERSONAL SUPPORT. WHAT  
IS NEW IN THE CURRENT SITUATION IS THAT IT IS RAMGOOLAM'S  
FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS WHO ARE SAYING, FOR THE FIRST TIME  
SINCE INDEPENDENCE TEN YEARS AGO, THAT IT IS TIME FOR A  
CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP, AND THAT IF HE WON'T STEP DOWN, HE

UGHT TO BE FORCED TO. END SUMMARY.

1. WHEN PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM RETURNS FROM HIS LATEST TRIP ABROAD THIS WEEKEND, HE WILL FIND HIMSELF FACED WITH ONE OF THE MORE DIFFICULT POLITICAL SITUATIONS OF HIS CAREER AS HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT SINCE INDEPENDENCE, CERTAINLY THE MOST TRYING SINCE THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF DECEMBER 1976. WHILE "CRISIS" WOULD BE TOO STRONG A WORD TO DESCRIBE THE CURRENT DOMESTIC POLITICAL CLIMATE, IT IS SERIOUS ENOUGH THAT MANY OBSERVERS ARE PREDICTING RAMGOOLAM WILL SOON STEP DOWN AS PRIME MINISTER OR LEAVE THE JOB BY "STEPPING UP" TO THE VACANT POST OF GOVERNOR GENERAL. NO ONE THINKS HE WANTS TO GIVE UP POWER SOON, BUT MANY PEOPLE THINK HE WILL HAVE TO, LIKE IT OR NOT. CERTAINLY HE WILL NOT GO WITHOUT A STRUGGLE, AND IT IS UNLIKELY THAT HE WILL BOW TO THE PRESSURE WHICH IS NOW BUILDING TO A HIGH PITCH, BUT WILL PREFER TO WAIT UNTIL HE HAS REESTABLISHED SOME AUTHORITY AND CALMED THE SITUATION, SO THAT HE CAN APPEAR TO BE ACTING UNDER HIS OWN IMPULSION.

2. THE GROWING UNHAPPINESS WITH RAMGOOLAM'S LEADERSHIP -- OR MORE PRECISELY HIS LACK OF LEADERSHIP -- HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO A BOIL BY THE VERY UNUSUAL PUBLIC CRITICISM RECENTLY VOICED BY THREE YOUNG LEADERSHIP PARTY DEPUTIES -- BOODHOO, BEEDASSY AND GUNGOOSINGH-- WHO HAVE CALLED FOR A WHOLE HOST OF REFORMS IN THE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY AND HAVE QUESTIONED CONFIDENTIAL

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RAMGOOLAM'S ABILITY TO CARRY THEM OUT, WHILE NOT STATING SO OPENLY (SEE PORT LOUIS A-12 AND A-14). THESE REFORMS INCLUDE SOME RATHER EXTREME DEMANDS, SUCH AS THE DEPARTURE FROM THE CABINET OF MINISTERS WALTER, JAGATSINGH AND MOHAMED, THE FORCED RETIREMENT OF A NUMBER OF RAMGOOLAM'S CRONIES, THE SEVERE REDUCTION OF MINISTERIAL TRAVEL ABROAD, BI-PARTISAN (WITH MMM PARTICIPATION) INVESTIGATIONS OF MOST OF THE PARASTATAL BODIES AND COMMISSIONS, OPENING UP THE PARTY TO MUSLIMS, AND MORE POWER TO THE RANK AND FILE. BUT MORE IMPORTANT THAN THESE IS THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MANY YEARS RAMGOOLAM'S PERSONAL DOMINATION OF THE LABOR PARTY AND THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN OPENLY QUESTIONED, AND THE QUESTIONING HAS BEEN RECEIVED WARMLY IN MANY QUARTERS THAT COUNT.

3. NO DOUBT RAMGOOLAM WILL MOVE QUICKLY AND FORCEFULLY TO REASSERT HIS AUTHORITY ONCE HE IS BACK ON MAURITIAN SOIL, BUT WHAT IS NOTEWORTHY IS THAT MANY PEOPLE ARE PREDICTING HE WILL NOT SUCCEED, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS CAREER. WHEN THESE YOUNG DEPUTIES VOICED SOME COMPLAINTS AT THE FIRST AND ONLY POST-ELECTORAL MEETING OF THE PARTY EXECUTIVE LAST MONTH, RAMGOOLAM IN EFFECT TOLD THEM THEY WERE OUT OF

ORDER. BUT THEIR ANSWER HAS BEEN TO GO PUBLIC AND TO THREATEN UNSPECIFIED DRASTIC ACTION IF THEIR DEMANDS ARE NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY. RAMGOOLAM CANNOT NOW GO SO FAR AS TO THROW THEM OUT OF THE PARTY OR DISSATISFY THEM SO MUCH THAT THEY WALK OUT, SINCE IT IS BELIEVED A NUMBER OF THEIR YOUNGER COLLEAGUES WOULD FOLLOW, THEIR ACTION WOULD BRING DOWN THE GOVERNMENT, AND RAMGOOLAM WOULD HAVE TO FACE ELECTIONS IN THE PRESENT VERY TURBULENT POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE. THEREFORE IT IS BELIEVED THAT RAMGOOLAM WILL HAVE TO TRY TO SOOTHE THE TIME, WILL HAVE TO PROMISE TO CARRY OUT SOME OF THEIR REFORMS, BUT IN THE END WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CONTINUE TO BEHAVE IN THE AUTOCRATIC FASHION WITH WHICH HE AS RULED PARTY AND GOVERNMENT FOR MORE THAN A DECADE.

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4. THIS NEW SITUATION HAS COME ABOUT AT A TIME WHEN MANY PEOPLE HAVE ALREADY BEEN COMPLAINING ABOUT THE LACK OF DIRECTION IN GOVERNMENT POLICY, ABOUT DRIFT AND APATHY, A BREAKDOWN IN DECISION-MAKING AND WEAKNESS IN THE FACE OF EXAGGERATED DEMANDS. THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS UNHAPPY WITH WHAT IT REGARDS AS SURRENDERS TO THE UNIONS WHICH HAVE AGGRAVATED DEPRESSED ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, LEADING TO A PLAGUE OF FACTORY CLOSINGS IN THE FREE ZONE. CITIZENS OF ALL SOCIAL LEVELS COMPLAIN ABOUT CONSTANT ELECTRICITY CUTS, UNRELIABLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT, POOR HEALTH CARE, WATER SHORTAGES, OVERCROWDED SCHOOLS, PORT CONGESTION, FOOD SHORTAGES, PRICE INFLATION AND INCREASED TAXES. ALL THESE FAILURES ARE BLAMED ON THE GOVERNMENT, WHETHER IT IS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE OR NOT, BECAUSE OF A FEELING THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD IMPROVE THE SITUATION IF IT HAD SOME LEADERSHIP AND DRIVE. THE PARLOUS STATE OF THE ECONOMY HAS FORCED THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPOSE CERTAIN AUSTERITY MEASURES, AND THESE OF COURSE ARE POPULAR WITH NO ONE. THE OPPOSITION MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM) HAS NATURALLY TRIED TO FOCUS AS MUCH ATTENTION AS POSSIBLE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S DIFFICULTIES AND FAILURES, BUT EVEN THE INDEPENDENT PRESS HAS HARPED ON THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF GOVERNMENTAL PERFORMANCE IN RECENT MONTHS.

5. INCREASINGLY THE DRIFT AND RUDDERLESSNESS ARE BEING BLAMED ON THE HELMSMAN, WHO HAS ALWAYS HAD THE CONTRARY REPUTATION OF BEING A MAN OF ACTION AND DECISIVENESS, THE ONE MAURITIAN POLITICAL LEADER WHO COULD GIVE ORDERS AND MAKE THEM STICK, WHO RULED WITH AN IRON HAND AND BROOKED NO CONTRADICTION OR INTERFERENCE. WHILE HE HAS MAINTAINED HIS AUTOCRATIC STYLE, RAMGOOLAM IS NOW SAID TO BE TIRED, OVER THE HILL, PERHAPS FEELING HIS AGE (77 LAST FALL), GETTING READY TO RETIRE. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE

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PUBLIC CRITICISM VOICED BY THE YOUNG DEPUTIES IS WELCOMED, FOR RAMGOOLAM'S COLLEAGUES FIND IT HARD TO RAISE SUCH ISSUES WITH HIM DIRECTLY, TO APPEAR TO BE CRITICIZING HIM, AND IT IS HARDLY CONCEIVABLE THAT ANY ONE OF HIS ASSOCIATES WOULD GO SO FAR AS TO SUGGEST TO HIM THAT IT IS TIME FOR HIM TO RETIRE AND HAND OVER POWER TO SOMEONE ELSE.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

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OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-08 /068 W

-----102807 201140Z /23

R 171430Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7312

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6. THE BELIEF THAT A CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP IS COMING, OR OUGHT TO COME, IS SO WIDESPREAD TODAY THAT MOST POLITICAL CONVERSATIONS CONCERN THE PROBABLE SUCCESSION, AS IF RAMGOOLAM WERE ALREADY ON THE WAY OUT. SPECULATION NARROWS TO ONE OF TWO PERSONS, FOR THE ONLY CREDIBLE SUCCESSORS ARE FINANCE MINISTER RANGADOO AND AGRICULTURE MINISTER BOOLELL. THE OTHER SENIOR MINISTERS ARE ALL DISMISSED OUT OF HAND. FOREIGN MINISTER WALTER IS FROM THE WRONG ETHNIC GROUP (GENERAL POPULATION -- CREOLE) TO BE LEADER OF A LARGELY HINDU-SUPPORTED PARTY, AND BESIDES HE IS POMPOUS, UNTRUSTWORTHY AND WIDELY DISLIKED. ALSO, HE WON HIS SEAT AS A "BEST-LOSER", WHICH IS THE SAME BASIS ON WHICH JAGATSINGH, MINISTER OF EDUCATION, IS DISQUALIFIED. FAGATSINGH IS DISMISSED AS WELL BECAUSE HE IS DEVIUS, CORRUPT AND UNPOPULAR. GHURBURRUN, MINISTER OF PLANNING, HAS A WIDE POLITICAL BASE (THE LOWER-CASTE HINDUS), BUT HE IS VENAL, THOROUGHLY DISHONEST, NOT VERY BRIGHT, WAS ABSENT IN INDIA FOR MOST OF THE YEARS SINCE INDEPENDENCE, AND IS SUSPECTED OF PLAYING FOOTsie WITH THE OPPOSITION MMM.

7. RINGADOO WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE THE INSIDE TRACK BECAUSE IT IS BELIEVED HE WOULD BE SUPPORTED FOR THE SUCCESSION BY RAMGOOLAM HIMSELF, AND THAT WOULD CARRY A LOT OF WEIGHT, IN FACT WOULD PROBABLY BE DECISIVE. RINGADOO IS RECOGNIZED AS ABLE, AS RELATIVELY MUCH MORE HONEST THAN THE OTHERS, AS A CONFIDENTIAL

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CAPABLE ADMINISTRATOR, AND AS A FLEXIBLE, PRAGMATIC MAN. BUT HE LACKS A BROAD POLITICAL BASE, IS NOT POPULAR, IS A BIT ALOOF AND QUITE PURITANICAL, FRAIL IN HEALTH, AND AS A MEMBER OF THE TAMIL MINORITY SUFFERS FROM CASTE DISCRIMINATION (THOUGH PEOPLE DON'T LIKE TO TALK ABOUT THIS). HE IS ALSO CONSIDERED RATHER LEFTIST, THOUGH HE HAS NO USE FOR THE MMM AND THIKS BERENGER AND COMPANY WOULD BE DISASTROUS FOR THE COUNTRY.

8. BOOLELL IS POPULAR WITH THE RANK AND FILE, IS RESPECTED AS A HIGH-CASTE HINDU, IS AMBITIOUS BUT NOT VERY CLEVER POLITICAL, GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF BEING LAZY, IS A CONSERVATIVE BUT WOULD PROBABLY MAKE A DEAL WITH THE MMM IF HE COULD THEREBY BECOME PRIME MINISTER. IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT HE HAS ENCOURAGED THE YOUNG DISSIDENT DEPUTIES TO MAKE THEIR MOVE, IN ORDER TO SHAKE UP THE PARTY, ENCOURAGE RAMGOOLAM TO RETIRE AND GIVE BOOLELL A CHANCE TO CHALLENGE FOR THE LEADERSHIP. THOUGH HIS SEVERAL RECENT EFFORTS TO ENHANCE HIS POSITION WITHIN THE PARTY HIERARCHY HAVE FAILED, BOOLELL HAS SPENT YEARS CULTIVATING THE PARTY RANK AND FILE AND THE ELECTORATE, HAS USED HIS POSITION TO SPREAD A GREAT MANY POLITICAL I.O.U'S THROUGH DISPENSING PATRONAGE AND OTHER FAVORS, AND HE COULD MOUNT A FORMIDABLE CHALLENGE TO RINGADOO IF RAMGOOLAM DECIDED TO BE NEUTRAL IN THE SUCCESSION FIGHT. IN SOME QUARTERS IT IS BELIEVED THAT RINGADOO AND BOOLELL HAVE MADE A TACIT DEAL BY WHICH RINGADOO WOULD SUCCEED RAMGOOLAM BUT WOULD RETIRE AFTER A FEW YEARS TO CONSERVE HIS HEALTH, WHEREUPON BOOLELL WOULD TAKE OVER.

9. THOUGH WE OBVIOUSLY HAVE NO SAY IN THE MATTER, FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW RINGADOO WOULD BE THE PREFERRED SUCCESSOR, FOR THESE REASONS: HE WOULD BE EASIER TO WORK WITH AND MORE RELIABLE; HE WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO SUCCEED IN KEEPING CONFIDENTIAL

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MAURITIUS ON AN EVEN KEEL AND IN PRESERVING THE MODERATE POLICIES OF THE RAMGOOLAM ERA; HE WOULD BE MUCH LESS LIKELY TO FORGE A COALITION WITH THE MMM; HE IS A BETTER ADMINISTRATOR

AND MORE CAPABLE OF BRINGING MAURITIUS OUT OF ITS PRESENT DIFFICULTIES.

10. THE OTHER FAVORITE TOPIC OF SPECULATION THESE DAYS IS HOW RAMGOOLAM WILL RETIRE -- AND NOT WHETHER, WHICH IS AN INDICATION OF THE EXTENT OF EROSION OF HIS STANDING. THE OBVIOUS WAY OUT FOR HIM WOULD BE TO STEP UP INTO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S POST, OR TO TRY TO CONVERT MAURITIUS INTO A REPUBLIC AND BECOME ITS FIRST PRESIDENT. THE PROBLEM IS THAT RAMGOOLAM HAS BEEN RUNNING THE SHOW FOR SO LONG THAT HE WOULD NOT MOVE COMFORTABLY INTO THE LARGELY CEREMONIAL POST OF GOVERNOR GENERAL. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE MMM OPPOSITION STRONGLY OPPOSES THE IDEA OF ESTABLISHING A REPUBLICAN PRESIDENCY WITH EXECUTIVE (RATHER THAN PURELY CEREMONIAL) POWERS, AND THAT IS THE ONLY KIND OF PRESIDENCY RAMGOOLAM WOULD CARE TO OCCUPY. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT A COMPROMISE COULD BE REACHED, BUT ONLY WITH THE CONCURRENCE OF THE MMM, FOR THEIR ASSEMBLY VOTES ARE NEEDED TO EFFECT A CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE.

11. RAMGOOLAM IS UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED AS A "WILY OLD FOX" AND THE MOST SKILLED POLITICIAN IN MAURITIUS, WITH NO ONE A CLOSE SECOND, SO SOME PEOPLE THINK HE WILL WEATHER THIS STORM AS HE HAS SO MANY OTHERS. BUT THERE ARE NEW ELEMENTS IN THE CURRENT SITUATION THAT CAUSE PEOPLE TO SPEAK OF A COMING "CRISIS." FOR ONE THING THE PRIME MINISTER IS GETTING OLDER AND THERE IS NO DOUBT HE IS SLOWING DOWN. HE HAS ALWAYS THOROUGHLY DOMINATED HIS PARTY AND IN THE DECADE SINCE INDEPENDENCE INDISCIPLINE SUCH AS THAT DISPLAYED BY BOODHOO AND COMPANY WAS UNHEARD OF. THE RULING COALITION IS NOT A FRAGILE ONE AS COALITIONS GO, BUT EVEN PMSD LEADER GAETAN DUVAL IS COMPLAINING PRIVATELY ABOUT RAMGOOLAM'S LACK OF LEADERSHIP AND IT IS BELIEVED THAT HE HAS ENCOURAGED

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THE YOUNG DISSIDENT LABOR DEPUTIES TO GO PUBLIC (A WIDESPREAD RUMOR SAYS HE MET WITH ALL THREE OF THE DISSIDENT LEADERS AT HIS HOME RECENTLY). IN A RECENT PRESS INTERVIEW DUVAL SAID HE WOULD WELCOME THE FUSION OF HIS PARTY WITH LABOR AND THEN REMARKED THAT THIS WOULD DEPEND ON "WHO WILL TAKE CHARGE OF THE LABOR PARTY," AS THOUGH RAMGOOLAM'S DEPARTURE WAS A FOREGONE CONCLUSION. THE ECONOMY IS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE, AND RAMGOOLAM'S ONLY SOLUTION SEEMS TO BE TO GIVE IN TO WHOMEVER IS EXERTING THE GREATEST PRESSURE AT THE MOMENT. THERE IS A MILITANT, DYNAMIC, HARD-WORKING OPPOSITION WHICH WON THE LAST ELECTIONS AND IS CONVINCED IT WILL WIN THE NEXT ONES. BERENGER AND HIS COHORTS GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF WORKING A LOT HARDER AND LONGER AT UNDERMINING THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COALITION THAN THE LATTER DO AT GOVERNING. AND BERENGER HAS JUST DECLARED PUBLICLY THAT THE PRESENT ECONOMIC

CRISIS IS WORSE THAN THAT OF 1973 WHICH RESULTED IN THE BREAK-UP OF THE LAST LABOR-PMSD COALITION.

12. SOMETHING ELSE IS NEW, AND PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANT THAT THE REST, IS THAT SOME OF RAMGOOLAM'S CLOSEST FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS ARE HOPING HE WILL NOW DECIDE TO STEP DOWN, OR STEP UP, AND TURN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE COUNTRY OVER TO SOMEONE ELSE. THESE ARE THE SAME PEOPLE WHO A YEAR AND A HALF AGO, BEFORE THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, COULD NOT CONCEIVE OF A DIFFERENT LEADER FOR MAURITIUS, AND THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A DISASTER IF HE WERE NOT RETURNED WITH A COMFORTABLE MAJORITY. AS IT TURNED OUT, HE LOST THE ELECTION, LARGELY THROUGH HIS OWN ERRORS (E.G., LABOR RAN SOME SURE LOSERS AS CANDIDATES, AND HE HAD THE FINAL SAY IN THEIR SELECTION). NOW THE SAME SUPPORTERS WISH HE WOULD SEE THE LIGHT AND RETIRE HIMSELF; THERE IS NOTHING MORE DAMAGING TO THE CREDIBILITY OF A LEADER THAN SUCH SENTIMENTS AMONG HIS FRIENDS.

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13. THE "OLD FOX" WILL NO DOUBT STEP FORWARD SMARTLY TO ASSERT HIMSELF, TO CALL ON THE DISSIDENTS TO STEP BACK INTO THE RANKS (WHILE PROMISING THEM A GREATER ROLE, MORE CONSULTATION, REFORMS HERE AND THERE), BUT ONE WONDERS IF HIS WELL-WORN TACTICS WILL CONTINUE TO WORK. HIS POWER TO THREATEN IS LIMITED. THE THREE DISSIDENTS WHO WENT PUBLIC WITH THEIR CRITICISMS HAVE POWER BASES OF THEIR OWN. EACH ONE OF THEM FINISHED FIRST IN HIS DISTRICT IN THE LAST PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, AND THEY DID NOT RUN ON RAMGOOLAM'S COATTAILS, AS DID MOST OF THE OTHER LABOR CANDIDATES, THE SUCCESSFUL AS WELL AS THE UNSUCCESSFUL. THOUGH THEY HAVE STATED PUBLICLY THAT THEY WILL STICK WITH LABOR, WILL NOT RESIGN, NOR DEKZ TO THE OPPOSITION, THE DISSIDENTS HAVE THE POWER TO BRING DOWN THE GOVERNMENT AND FORCE AN ELECTION, WHICH RAMGOOLAM IS DETERMINED TO AVOID.

14. SO WE CAN ANTICIPATE A PERIOD OF POLITICAL MANEUVER AND MANIPULATION, AS ALL THE AMBITIOUS POLITICIANS TRY TO CAPITALIZE ON RAMGOOLAM'S NEWLY WEAKENED POSITION. NO ONE WILL MAKE A DECISIVE MOVE PRIOR TO THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS ON MARCH 12, BUT AFTER THAT, WHEN THE ASSEMBLY RESUMES SITTING, IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE PRESSURES ON RAMGOOLAM WILL MOUNT. IN APRIL, MAY OR JUNE, THE SMART MONEY SAYS, SOMETHING DECISIVE WILL HAPPEN. THE SMART MONEY IS NO LONGER BETTING ON THE OLD FOX.

KEELEY

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRIME MINISTER, TENURE OF OFFICE, RULING PARTY, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 17 feb 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
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**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
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**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**TAGS:** PINT, PGOV, MP, (RAMGOOLAM, SEEWOOSAGUR)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/1deaa2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014